

May 25, 2000

SALUTE TO COMMANDER AL
BERNARD

HON. SONNY CALLAHAN

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring a man of outstanding accomplishment, Commander Al Bernard.

Commander Bernard is retiring from the United States Coast Guard this week, and I would like to call attention to his extraordinary and meritorious service to his country.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the Coast Guard is an invaluable branch of the United States military. The men and women of our Coast Guard keep our waters free of narcotics and illegal aliens, perform almost all of the search and rescue missions for the United States and provide security and safety in our waterways.

This is just a small sampling of the duties performed by the Coast Guard. We all owe them a huge debt of gratitude for the services they provide.

For 24 years, Commander Bernard has faithfully performed these and other duties in service to our great country. Prior to donning the Coast Guard uniform, Commander Bernard was also a proud U.S. Marine, where he served as an infantryman in Southeast Asia. He has spent more than half of his life in service to this nation and today, we are a grateful nation for his sacrifice.

From his humble beginnings operating small boats as a coxswain to his assignment as liaison officer to the House of Representatives in Washington, Commander Bernard has performed each and every job as a true patriot.

He quickly rose through the ranks of the Coast Guard and in 1979, he was accepted to Officer Candidate School. After receiving his commission, Al's first assignment was as a security officer at Training Center New York, Governors Island. Just a year later, he was promoted to First Lieutenant and deck watch officer on the USCGC *Courageous*, in Cape Canaveral, Florida. He was then chosen to be executive officer of USCGC *Shearwater* in Key West, Florida. In addition, was made the senior controller at the Pacific Area/Twelfth USCG District Rescue Coordination Center.

From there, Al Bernard's military career skyrocketed. He received command of his first ship, the USCGC *Nantucket*, in Roosevelt roads, Puerto Rico. It should be noted that Al is the first American of Puerto Rican descent to command his own ship.

Due to his exceptional abilities, Commander Bernard was relocated to Washington to serve his country at USCG Headquarters. He later received command of another cutter, the USCGC *Citrus*, which was homeported in Coos Bay, OR. After finishing another productive tour, he was made chief, Cutter Management Branch, Coast Guard Pacific Area in Alameda, California.

While on duty in California, he was selected to attend the U.S. Naval War College, where he graduated with distinction, earning a Master of Arts Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Upon graduation, Commander Bernard was given his third command, the USCGC *Decisive* in St. Petersburg, Florida; he later crossdecked to USCGC *Resolute*.

Most recently, he was selected in 1998 to become the liaison officer to the House of Representatives in Washington, where I can personally attest he has served every man and women who wears the Coast Guard uniform with great distinction.

Over the course of his 24 years of service to the United States, Commander Bernard has demonstrated his versatility by serving brilliantly in both the military and legislative arenas. Al Bernard has been recognized for his achievements with numerous awards, such as the Bronze Star with "V" device for valor, the Purple Heart, and Meritorious Service Medal with an "O" device. He has also received seven Coast Guard Commendation Medals with "O" device, the Coast Guard Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon and various other awards.

He was also selected as the 1989 recipient of the U.S. Navy League's Captain David Jarvis award for professional competence and inspirational leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Command Al Bernard on an illustrious military career. Likewise, we salute his wonderful wife, Ann, and their two children, Jason and Bernadelle, who made the many sacrifices military families make in supporting their husband and father all these years. We wish Al the best of luck in all of his future endeavors, for he is truly a fine example for all Americans.

HONORING MAKIA EPIE

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a special young man, Makia Epie, of Cedar Hill, Texas, who is proving to be an outstanding addition to the Air Force Academy. Makia, who entered the Academy in the fall of 1997, has been named Flight Commander for the upcoming academic session. I know the entire 24th Congressional District joins me in celebrating this accomplishment.

As Flight Commander, Makia will assist the Cadet Squadron Commander in developing and training the basic cadets. Makia will work to ensure that cadets develop the right military attitude and attention to duty. He will do this by setting an appropriate example in leading his flight drills.

Makia's performance in the Air Force Academy deserves the highest praise, and I extend my sincerest appreciation for his service to his country. I wish him and his family the best in their future endeavors.

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HONORING THE CITY OF
TORRANCE

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Torrance. For the last 41 years, the City of Torrance has honored and acknowledged the men and women of our military during its annual Armed Forces Day Parade.

The Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade is an important event for the residents of the South Bay. Torrance boasts one of the oldest and most noteworthy Armed Forces Day parades in the country. Thousands of people, many waving American flags, lined the streets last Saturday to honor our Armed Forces. Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen was also on hand to participate in the celebration.

The parade has persevered during the last 41 years. It has been protested, glorified, and even scaled back at times. But despite the circumstances of the day, the City of Torrance has held the parade to pay tribute to the men and women of the Armed Forces. This is a valued tradition in the South Bay, one that will continue for years to come.

I congratulate Torrance Mayor Dee Hardison on the success this year's parade. I also commend the citizens of Torrance for they are the ones who have helped keep this tradition alive. We live in a great country. It is our Armed Forces who are responsible for protecting and defending our freedom throughout the world.

COMMENDING ISRAEL'S REDE-
PLOYMENT FROM SOUTHERN
LEBANON

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in commending Israel for its courageous withdrawal from Lebanon. The Israeli action sends a strong signal that Israel is very serious about pursuing a comprehensive peace with all its neighbors. At the same time, it is critical for this Congress to demand a cessation of all terrorist activities in southern Lebanon and to strongly encourage the government of Syria to remove its troops from Lebanon as well.

GRANTING PERMANENT NORMAL
TRADE RELATIONS TO CHINA

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2000

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased with the passage of yesterday's legislation to grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) to